



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Steven L. Beshear, Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Lynn True or Sarah Gracey
502-564-4496

Governor Beshear Proclaims Arbor Day for April 1 ***First Lady participates in state ceremony, tree planting on Capitol Grounds***

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 1, 2011) – Kentucky First Lady Jane Beshear joined the Division of Forestry today in commemorating Kentucky's 115th annual Arbor Day by planting an American Hornbeam on the grounds of the Governor's Mansion. **Earlier this year**, Gov. Steve Beshear proclaimed April 1, 2011 as Arbor Day in the Commonwealth, continuing the tradition of observing the first Friday in April as Kentucky's Arbor Day.

Leah MacSwords, director of the Kentucky Division of Forestry, opened the ceremony by acknowledging the importance of environmental stewardship and Arbor Day in Kentucky. MacSwords also extended appreciation to the Finance and Administration Cabinet for co-hosting the event.

"Conserving our natural resources is a priority of this administration and for all citizens. I am pleased that Kentuckians plant nearly a half million trees as an act of good stewardship and in celebration of Arbor Day throughout the month of April," said MacSwords.

During the event, the newest Tree Line USA, Bluegrass Energy, and the newest Tree Campus USA winners, Centre College, University of Louisville and Western Kentucky University, were recognized for their efforts to protect and enhance urban and community forests. Tree Line USA recognizes public and private utility companies that promote safe, reliable electric service in conjunction with healthy trees across utility areas. Tree Campus USA recognizes college and university campuses for effectively managing campus trees and fostering urban forestry programs. Both programs are

supported nationally by the Arbor Day Foundation, National Association of State Foresters and locally by state forestry agencies.

Mrs. Beshear noted the importance of celebrating Arbor Day in the Commonwealth's communities. "Arbor Day is a reminder that we need to protect and properly care for our trees because of the benefits they provide, like shading our city streets and sidewalks, increasing our property values, and saving on energy costs."

Many other Arbor Day events have been planned throughout Kentucky during the month of April. Schools, communities and organizations throughout the state often hold their own Arbor Day ceremonies to highlight the social, environmental and economic benefits of trees. For more information about the state ceremony or other Arbor Day events, contact the Kentucky Division of Forestry at 1-800-866-0555 or visit the **Arbor Day Foundation's** Web site at <http://www.arborday.org/>.

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